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Review of the Contest, Concerning Four New Regiments Graciously Offered by His Majesty to be Sent to India...

By
Alexander Dalrymple

REVIEW of the CONTEST,

concerning

FOUR NEW REGIMENTS

Graciously offered by HIS MAJESTY to be sent to INDIA
on the *late apprehension* of *War*,

and

Then, gratefully accepted,

by

The *Court* of *Directors* of the *East-India Company*,

Who,

On the *Change* of *Circumstances*, by the *re-establishment* of *Peace*,

Have

Rescinded their *Resolution* of *Acceptance:*

It appearing the *Expence*, to the EAST-INDIA COMPANY,
would be above £50,000 ℔ annum
More, than a *like number* of *Recruits* sent to *India*
in
The Company's Service.

There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine;
The Court awards it, and the Law doth give it.

Shakespear, *Merchant of Venice*.

LONDON:
Printed by GEORGE BIGG, 1788.

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PREFACE.

THE Writer, of the following Sheets, was impelled, on perusal of the Papers delivered to the East India Proprietors, to offer his sentiments on the subject: he is very sensible, how much he must owe to the indulgence of the Publick, if they are favourably received, the shortness of the time not permitting a due arrangement of the materials in their best order; a full discussion of the arguments; nor even correction of the language, in which his ideas were first expressed.

The Writer is not stimulated by any resentments; he has not *individually*, or *relatively*, (but as a Subject of the Realm, and a Friend to the East India Company) any *interest* in the Contest; he lives in habits of Friendship with Some on all sides of this Question: He has seen too much of the World, ever to *expect*, even that men who mean well, shall think alike; and having always maintained the *right* of *judging* for *himself*, he has learnt to allow that *self-judg-*

a 2 *ment*

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ment to others, without imputing profligacy of intention, or weaknefs of underftanding.

The Writer is not accuftomed to fpeak, with *refervation* of his *opinions*: He therefore fairly avows, that feveral circumftances have raifed his apprehenfions, "that it is in Some "Men's Contemplation to *abolifh* the *Politi-"cal Exiftence* of the Eaft-India Company "in 1794, when the prefent term of Their "exclufive Charter expires."

The Eaft-India Company, under the check of The Crown and Parliament whenever They abufe their truft, and the execution of effential Juftice, on their Servants who may be found guilty, is the only Eftablifhment, under which India will not be the *certain* and *fpeedy* RUIN of THIS COUNTRY.

The confequence of *unqualified* India Patronage to THE CONSTITUTION, in whatever hands that *unqualified* Patronage fhould be placed, would be TOO FATAL! not to give an *alarm!* at the moft *diftant movements* of THIS MINISTER OF DESTRUCTION!

26th February 1788.

21st February, 1788.

THE matter lately under difcuffion at the India-Houfe, which comes before the Proprietors of Eaft-India-Stock, on Wednefday next, for their final determination by Balot, is of the moft ferious concern!

An impartial Bye-ftander cannot without aftonifhment behold to what lengths This Difpute has been carried! when he fees a Meffage, in the ftile of an Egyptian-Tafk-Mafter, declaring that The Board of Controul are determined to provide *Tranfports* for *carrying thefe Troops* to India at *The Company's expence*, left, eventually The Reference to the Court of Proprietors fhould not be conformable to their wifh! altho' the Court of Directors had humbly requefted " no " meafures might be taken, by H. M. " Minifters, for *tranfporting* thofe troops, " 'till the fentiments of the General Court " could be known;" and had before informed the Board, " that after difpatching " the Bombay and China Ships, there " would remain 17 Ships, in which H. M. troops

" M. troops might be conveyed to India,
" in caſe the meaſure ſhould be finally
" determined upon."

This led me to inveſtigate the whole Proceedings; of which I think it proper to give a ſummary View.

The Act of Parliament of 24th George the 3d, required The Eaſt India Company, to make every practicable retrenchment, and reduction, in their Eſtabliſhments in India, Civil and Military; and, after receiving the neceſſary information, The Court of Directors were to declare, what would be adequate to the ſupport of the dignity of the Kingdom, and the ſecurity of the Britiſh Poſſeſſions in India.

The Company were in the mean while, reſtrained from ſending any new Servant to India, Civil or Military, under the degree of Counſellor or Commander in Chief.

After The Proper Eſtabliſhment was agreed upon, The Company were reſtrained

from

from appointing a greater number of perſons to be Writers or Cadets, or in any other capacity, than what would be ſufficient to ſupply vacancies, and keep the Eſtabliſhment compleat.

When this Eſtabliſhment was compleated, The Company were required to make all promotions, civil and military, in regular progreſſive ſucceſſion to the higher ranks, according to ſeniority—and annually, within fourteen days after the Meeting of Parliament, to lay before both Houſes, a ſchedule of their Civil and Military Eſtabliſhment.

There is ſo much ſound policy and good ſenſe in theſe Regulations, that every impartial Perſon muſt give them his heart-felt approval.

In 1785, The Eaſt India Company accordingly formed the outline of this permanent Eſtabliſhment: which, in general, met with the approbation of The Board of Controul: but The Board made *conſiderable reduction* in the *number* of *European Infantry* in *Bengal:* on

 this

this The Court of Directors remonſtrated, on the 26th Auguſt; and The Board in their reply, dated 5th September ſay, "with regard to the number of Europeans on the "Bengal Eſtabliſhment, we were inclined to "think it ſufficient for the purpoſe of that "Government, *conſidering the flattering proſpect* of peace *in India*, which the preſent "ſtate of your affairs appears to promiſe. "And it is evident, that in every conſideration of this ſubject, *regard muſt be had* not "*only* to the advantage to be derived from *any given number* of Europeans, but alſo to the "probability of your being able to ſupport "ſuch eſtabliſhment by a ſufficient annual "proportion of recruits from Europe; for if "this cannot be done, a *larger nominal* Eſtabliſhment, *deficient* in it's *effective ſtrength*, "may *add* to the *expence*, but *cannot increaſe* "the *ſecurity* of *your provinces*." However The board were induced to add to the Military Eſtabliſhment at Bengal, two battalions of European Infantry and one battalion of Euro-

pean Artillery, " by which (The Board obſerve " to the Court of Directors) the whole num- " ber of Europeans in your Bengal army will " amount (officers included) to above 5000 " men, a force exceeding that ſtated by you to " be neceſſary, and *fully adequate* in our opinion " to the *ſecurity* of *thoſe valuable poſſeſſions*."

The foregoing will clearly ſhew, what was, on all ſides, conſidered to be a *Peace Eſtabliſhment fully adequate* to *the ſecurity* of *India*.

The Eaſt India Company were, by the Act 21st of G. 3d, to pay to His Majeſty, Two Lacks of Current Rupees ⅌ annum for each Regiment conſiſting of 1000 men, ſent to India on the *requiſition* of the Company.

It had been uſual at the concluſion of the War, for all his Majeſty's Forces ſerving in India to be called home; with a permiſſion given them to enliſt in The Company's Service: However, at the concluſion of the late

War,

War, there remained in India Several of His Majesty's Regiments, *viz.*

19th Regiment of Light Dragoons

36th, 52d, 71st, 72d, 73d . . of Foot

besides

2 . . . . of Hanoverians

The Number wanting to compleat The Complements of these Regiments by the last Return dated 1st February 1787 was	2644
Recruits sent out 1786 and 1787 not then arrived	1280
Deficient	1364
Supposing none died, and no Casualties in India	
But, by computation, it appears the Casualties of a year amount to	1000
So that the number required to be sent now to compleat the Complements would be .	2364
And at their arrival, probably, in proportion to annual Casualties	300
Total deficiency to compleat His Majesty's Regiments now in India	2664

The Deficiency of Privates, in The East-India-Company's Military Establishment, by the last returns from India, of January 1787, viz.

Infantry

	Infantry			Artillery			Total		
	Eſtab.	returns	Def.	Eſtab.	rets.	Def.	Eſtab.	rets.	Def.
Bengal	3264	1917	1347	840	707	133	4104	2624	1480
Madraſs	2176	1175	1001	560	525	35	2736	1700	1036
Bombay	1088	648	440	280	251	29	1368	899	469
	6528	3740	2788	1680	1483	197	8208	4223	2985

Deficiency by the laſt return	2985
Recruits ſent out laſt Seaſon	1931
Deficiency ſuppoſing none died, and no caſualties in India	1054
But, by the beſt calculation that can be made, the caſualties in a year amount to . . .	1100
Deficiency now exiſting	2154
And, by the time of their arrival, more about	350
Total Deficiency to compleat the Company's Peace Eſtabliſhment	2504

The Number of Recruits, neceſſary for The Company to ſend out this year, to compleat their Peace Eſtabliſhment, being 2500; The Court of Directors, on the 31ſt Auguſt 1787, applied to His Majeſty for Permiſſion to recruit (not exceeding 2500 Men) purſuant to the act of the 21ſt.

The Royal aſſent was not communicated, by the Secretary of State, 'till the 30th October,

October, a very reprehensible delay, from neglect, for I will not suppose any intention, by Public distress, to compel The East India Company to accept of the Four Regiments afterwards offered.

The Situation of Public affairs, soon after the Company's application for permission to recruit, making the event of a war with France more than probable; On the 17th October 1787 The Chairman acquainted the Court of Directors with the Heads of a Conversation held by Mr. Dundas, with himself and Deputy Chairman. The Heads of this Conversation were communicated by Mr. Dundas in *writing*, enclosed in a letter to The Chairman dated 13th October, to *prevent inaccuracy* in the *communication*; and Mr. Dundas mentions that the Copy had been conveyed to His Majesty, who approved it: It is fortunate this paper was a *written communication*, because otherwise, had it rested merely on the *words* of a

conversation

conversation, very different representations, of the purport of that conversation, might have been afterwards made by the different parties concerned in the transaction.

It appears, by Mr. Dundas's letter of 13th October, that this Conversation had occurred a few days before; altho' it does not appear The Court of Directors received any intimation concerning it, 'till the 17th.

The Paper follows

" It is His Majesty's intention imme-
" diately to raise four Regiments for
" service in India, each Regiment to
" consist of ten companies with the follow-
" ing Establishments, 1 Colonel. 1 Lieut.
" Colonel. 1 Major. 7 Captains. 1 Capt.
" Lieutenant. 22 Lieutenants. 8 Ensigns.
" 1 Adjutant. 1 Quarter-Master. 1 Surgeon.
" 1 Surgeon's-Mate. 1 Chaplain 30. Serjeants.

" 40 Corporals. 20 Drummers. 2 Fifers.
" 710 Privates. *

" In forming these Regiments it is his
" Majesty's wish to extend the benefit of
" this measure to the meritorious Officers
" in the East India Company's Service as
" well as His own, and therefore He is in-
" clined to take the recommendation of
" the East India Company to the follow-
" ing Commissions in the said Corps, viz.

" 1 Lieut-Colonel. 3 Majors. 14 Captains.
" 44 Lieutenants 16 Ensigns.

" The number of privates to be raised
" for these four Regiments will amount
" to 2840 men, which *His Majesty undertakes*
" *to*

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* Total, officers included, each Regiment	848	in all 4 Regiments	3392
Non Commission - officers and Privates	802	. . .	3280

" *to raiſe*, on condition of The Company
" bearing a proportionable ſhare of the
" expence, which at five guineas ℔ man,
" for one half of the levies, will amount to
" about £7000, to be paid when the men
" are raiſed.

" The Officers to be recommended
" by The Company muſt be of ſimilar
" rank in their ſervice."

Here let us pauſe a little! It cannot but appear that His Majeſty's Miniſters have indiſcreetly brought themſelves into an Embaraſſment.—Are theſe Regiments actual State Regiments provided for by Parliament? or are they not? if They are not! It is a meaſure fraught with the moſt alarming apprehenſions! For, according to that Doctrine! His Majeſty may raiſe what number of Forces He pleaſes, without the conſent or cogniſance of Parliament: Provided his own Finances, or Reſources, can pay Them.

If They are, They cannot be continued as a permanent Eſtabliſhment in Peace, without a repeal of that Act; by which That permanent Eſtabliſhment was virtually fixed.

I confeſs The continuance of *any Kings Troops* in *India*, during Peace, appears to me, a *dangerous!* if not an *unconſtitutional* meaſure! for altho' we may have nothing to apprehend from His preſent Majeſty,—to what an alarming ſituation may this Country be reduced? if The Sovereign may employ its Force, in foreign conqueſt, without the concurrence of Parliament—particularly if The *Sovereign Power* ſhall be the *only deliberative*, or *efficient*, *power* in *India*—and The Eaſt-India-Company the *Mere-Regiſters* of *Its Edicts!*

It is from His preſent Majeſty's Prudence and Philanthropy we muſt truſt for the

Eſtabliſhment

Eſtabliſhment of our future ſecurity, by His moderation in reſtraining His own power for the benefit of poſterity—leſt Ambition ſhould ever incite any Prince, hereafter, to ſacrifice the happineſs of a People to the ſplendor of his own Glory! and what *Throne* is there, that has *not* been filled with ſuch Princes?

" Extenſion of Dominion is an *irre-*
" *ſiſtible* deſire; The conſiderate Stateſ-
" man muſt perceive India to be ſuch a
" FIELD! that, if once opened to the
" Imperial Force of this Country, our
" *Powers*, however great, would be ſwal-
" lowed up, and vaniſh, like the vaſt Rivers
" in the Sandy Deſerts of Africa. But
" whilſt left *ſolely* to the Company, the
" Government can calmly look on—and
" ſay—*Thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther.*"

When The Heads of Mr. Dundas's Converſation were communicated to The Court

of

of Directors, It was without any previous intimation, to The Members of the Court, of the Subject of deliberation, as is usually done, when any Matter of importance is to be discussed: When it was introduced, It was urged, that this was a Matter of that nature and importance, as required a full examination and consideration; wherefore, an adjournment was proposed: but the Chairman, without allowing the same number of days, for the Court's deliberation, as He himself had taken to introduce It, even refused twenty-four hours for consideration, and Precipitately insisted on an immediate determination, without any Documents, of Expence or Consequences, being produced.

On the Balot it was by 10 to 9 "Resolved "that the Right Honourable Henry Dundas "be desired to express the grateful sentiments "of the Court of Directors for His Majesty's "gracious attention to the safety of The "Company's possessions in India; and that

"they

" they *consent* to *receive* the succours offered,
" in the manner proposed in the said Memo-
" randum."

By what forced construction of Words or Grammar, *consent* to *receive* can be made synonimous to a *requisition*, will require an Adept in the mystery of Philology to point out.

When this offer of His Majesty was made, The Situation of Public Affairs made it highly expedient, for The Company to accept, almost, any Means of encreasing their Military Force in India; altho' no resolution, of such Importance, should be taken precipitately, and without due deliberation, His Majesty's gracious attention, to the safety of The Company's possessions in India, certainly had a claim to their most grateful Sentiments.

After His Majesty's Offer was accepted, difficulties arose in carrying into effect, that part of it, by which The Company were

to recommend their own officers to be commiſſioned in His Majeſty's Service.

To underſtand theſe circumſtances, It may be neceſſary to ſay a few words, on the different nature of the Military Promotion and Proviſion, in the King's and Company's Service.

In the King's, It is well known there is no regular gradation before an officer becomes a Colonel, but that inferiour Promotion may be obtained, by favour in new Corps, and by purchaſe in the Old.

On the contrary, in The Company's Service, Men have always riſen by ſeniority, not in Regimental, but in the Army Liſt; The few abuſes, of irregular promotions, is now entirely prevented, by the Parliamentary Regulations ſecuring the ſucceſſion by ſeniority, in the Company's Service: where no promotions were ever made by purchaſe, and conſe-

confequently that grievance, exifting to full extent in the King's, has no place in The Company's. Befides, in The Company's Service, There is a *Military Fund*, eftablifhed for the benefit of Officers, their widows, and common foldiers, So that Men difabled by long fervice, or difafter, have a certain provifion, not only for themfelves, but for what is more dear to them! a Provifion for their Families, which is a very important Superiority over the King's Service.

It muft be obvious, that it was probable, the moft meritorious of The Company's Officers, who might have no all-prevailing Friends in England, nor affluent Fortunes to buy promotion, might not chufe, to forego their certain profpects in the Company's Service, by accepting a Commiffion in the King's.

The Court of Directors on the 19th Oct. 1787, Refolved, "That all officers who fhall

accept of Commiſſions in His Majeſty's Service, ſhall from that time be eſteemed to have relinquiſhed. The Company's Service."

On an haſty view, this might appear to be meant to diſcourage their Officers from entering into The King's Service, but by The deed of Agreement, between the Eaſt India Company and Lord Clive, (who had contributed to the Eſtabliſhment of this Military Fund) it was confined ſolely, for the benefit of the Officers, &c. in the *ſervice* of the *Eaſt India Company.* This reſolution was, therefore, only meant, to prevent any doubts: The extenſion to thoſe Officers, not immediately in the Company's Service, being beyond the power of The Court of Directors, without recourſe to the *new-confuſion* of *Language*, by which, as *conſenting* to *accept* is ſynonimous to *require:* Words being but *wind* may be explained to mean any thing.

It ſoon occurred to The Court of Directors, that very great difficulties muſt attend their nominating Officers to theſe Regiments: If the Senior Officers did not leave their Service, in which they had been brought up, Their Juniors immediately, by accepting a King's Commiſſion, ſtepped over them. The King's Officers of an equal denomination having a Superiour Rank to The Company's. Altho' this may be the *legal Rule*, whatever is in itſelf *unjuſt*, cannot be made *otherwiſe* by any Law Human or Divine! That, of two Brothers acting in the ſame Public Duty for their Country's cauſe, one, receiving a benediction by the King's Signature to his Commiſſion, like the miraculous touch for the Evil, ſhall at once ſuperſede the unſanctified Brother; this is too prepoſterous, in theſe enlightened days, when the reſpect to Kings! is the *reſpect* of *reaſon* to the *Firſt Officcr* of *The State*, and not the *adulation* of *Idolatry* to the *Pageant*.

 On

On the 1ſt Nov. 1787, It was referred to a Board, of the Company's Field Officers, to conſider and report the beſt mode, of carrying into effect His Majeſty's gracious permiſſion, of appointing Half the Officers, under Lieutenant Colonels, in the four new Regiments going to India. On the 7th, the Report of the Board of Field Officers was received, and and It was, on Motion from the Chair, propoſed to take it into conſideration, that day *three weeks*: Which was on motion amended to *Tueſday* next the 13th Inſtant.

On the 13th Nov. 1787, When the Court met, a letter from Brigadier General Richard Smith was read, of that days date, recommending to the Court, to endeavour to obtain relief, for The Company's Military Officers, who will be ſubjected to the mortification of ranking under their Juniors in ſervice: The Court had alſo before them other repreſentations of the hardſhips, to which the Company's

pany's Officers thought themſelves ſubject on this account.

The Court was converted into a Committee of the whole Court, when a Petition was propoſed to His Majeſty, ſtating the hardſhip to which The Company's Officers were expoſed on this head.

The Conſideration was unanimouſly poſtponed to the 20th of November, in the mean while the Chairman and Deputy Chairman were deſired to wait on the Board of Controul to requeſt their ſerious conſideration of the ſituation of the Company's army in India, in reſpect of The Company's Officers being commanded by Juniors bearing His Majeſty's Commiſſion; the diſſatisfaction which has already ariſen in India on that Account; the probable increaſe of ſuch diſſatisfaction: The decided opinion of the Committee, that it is highly expedient to remove the cauſes thereof, by giving the Company's Officers rank with the

the King's, while ſerving in India, according to the dates of their reſpective commiſſions; that the Committee fear the moſt miſchievous conſequences, ariſing from the preſent diſtinction, between the King's and Company's Officers, and therefore moſt *earneſtly entreat* the Right Honourable Board to *point out* the *mode of application*, they think *moſt proper* for the *deſired purpoſe*, and that they will be pleaſed to give their aſſiſtance and ſupport, upon ſuch application.

The Petition which had been propoſed as a mode of application to the Crown was communicated to the Board, but they were appriſed, that the conſidertaion of it was poſtponed, in hopes of being favoured with the Board's ſentiments.

On the 20th The Chairman and Deputy Chairman reported to the Court of Directors, that they had attended the India Board yeſterday, with the proceedings of

that

that day, when Mr. Dundas [the only Member prefent] informed them, he was as defirous as the Directors could be, to fee the Company's Officers happy and fatisfied with their ranks; that the Board had given the ftrongeft proofs of thefe fentiments, in the General letter to Bengal of 21ft July, 1786 and that he referred it to the confideration of the Court, whether it would not be proper to wait the anfwer to that letter [expected by the firft fhip [a]] before they take any further fteps therein.

Several paragraphs on this footing were then offered by The Chairman, but negatived by the Court; who on a Balot "Refolved That the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman be defired to wait upon the Right Honourable the Commiffioners for the

[a] It is reported the Veffell that carried this letter was at the Cape in November -- An anfwer cannot therefore be expected by the firft Ship.

the affairs of India, to ſtate to them the difficulties the Court find themſelves under, in filling up the Commiſſions in the four new Regiments intended to be ſent to India; and the dangerous diſcuſſions, which they apprehend therefrom, among their officers in India; and to conſult with them upon ſome mode for obviating the apprehended inconveniences, either by an application to His Majeſty for the granting of equal rank to their officers, ſerving with His Majeſty's Troops in the Eaſt-Indies, or *for the withdrawing entirely*, the *Regiments* intended to be ſent, in conſequence of the alteration which has taken place in public affairs, and ſince the adoption of the meaſure."

On the 28th November The Court were informed, that the foregoing Reſolution had been communicated to Mr. Dundas, who had promiſed to lay it before the

Board

Board, and that their obſervations thereon would be tranſmitted in writing.

On the 4th December a letter, from Mr. Dundas to the Chairman, containing the obſervations of the Board of Controul, on the Reſolution of the 21ſt Nov. 1787, was laid before The Court of Directors. As it is of the utmoſt conſequence to the impartiality of diſcuſſion, that a fair Statement be given of the Subject to be diſcuſſed, It ſeems neceſſary to give the letter in the *very* words.

To the Chairman of the Eaſt-India Company.

" Sir,

" I have communicated to the other Mem-
" bers of the Board, the Reſolution of the
" Court of Directors of the 21ſt November,
" which I received from you, and the Deputy
" Chairman, a few days ago. We are all
" equally impreſſed with the importance of
" the ſubject, and feel ourſelves as anxious as

" any of the Directors can be, that every pro-
" per attention ſhould be paid to the ſitua-
" tion and feelings of the meritorious officers
" in the ſervice of the Eaſt-India Company.
" The paragraphs in the diſpatches to which
" I formerly referred you, are proofs that this
" ſubject has not eſcaped our early attention,
" and the late communication of rank in his
" own army, offered by His Majeſty, to no
" leſs than 78 officers, in the ſervice of the
" Eaſt-India-Company, is a further proof that
" no opportunity is omitted of repreſenting
" our ſentiments to His Majeſty, in the man-
" ner we underſtood to be moſt conducive to
" the intereſts of your officers. And from
" the ſame motive it is that we wiſhed, that
" before adopting any general ſyſtem, to be
" furniſhed with a report from the Governors
" of your ſettlements abroad, what, in their
" opinion, would moſt effectually tend to an-
" ſwer the object we have in view. We
" wiſhed for ſuch a report, becauſe we have
" the beſt reaſon to know, that they feel

" cordially

" cordially and impartially on this ſubject;
" and from their ſituations have the beſt op-
" portunities of being informed what arrange-
" ments, under all the preſent circumſtances
" of the government of India, would moſt
" completely accord with the ſentiments of
" your officer[a] ſerving there. But altho'
" this mode of conducting the buſineſs is moſt
" conſonant to our opinions, we are far
" from wiſhing to avoid a diſcuſſion of it
" with the Court of Directors, but in doing
" ſo you muſt be aware that the ſubject
" leads to much more detail than probably
" you have yet given to it. We have given
" directions for the purpoſe of being au-
" thentically informed what are the number
" of officers now in your ſervice, with the
" dates of their Commiſſions. Being fur-
" niſhed with this information, we ſhall then
" be ready to enter into further detail, from

[a] " officer" ſo in the India Houſe Copy. Q? If officers in general are meant, or the Governor General?

" which we ſhall be enabled to judge of " the full extent of your propoſition, and " the conſequences to which it neceſſarily " leads.

" In alluding to your propoſition, we de- " ſire to be diſtinctly underſtood not to refer " to the concluding part of your reſolution. " The idea of diminiſhing any part of the " Britiſh forces now in India, or in contem- " plation to be ſent there, is ſo adverſe to " what we conceive to be for the welfare " and ſecurity of His Majeſty's dominions in " India, we cannot allow ſuch an idea to " enter into any further diſcuſſion to take " place between us.

" I have the honour to be, Sir,

" Your moſt obedient humble Servant,

" HENRY DUNDAS."

" India Board, Whitehall,
" 29th Nov. 1787."

I can-

I cannot avoid making ſome remarks on this letter; Mr. Dundas dwells on His Majeſty's offering the communication of rank in His own Army, to 78 Officers in the Service of the Eaſt-India-Company, as a *proof* that no "*opportunity* is *omitted* of repreſenting *our* [i. e. "the Board of Controul] ſentiments to His "Majeſty, in the *manner* we *underſtood* to "be *moſt conducive* to the *intereſts* of your "officers."

The Officers in The Company's Service exceed 1800, who would be ſuperſeded by 86 of His Majeſty's Officers in the four Regiments propoſed.

But even the 78, ſelected from The Company's for the King's Service, were to be ſuperſeded; for, admitting that it was the Senior Officers of each Rank in the Company's Service that would be converted, however improbable the ſuppoſition, Theſe Officers of the Company's, were to be admitted according to

their

their *then rank*; and it is notorious that the King's quota of 86 Officers, in these four Regiments, were advanced a *step*, They who were made *Ensigns*, having before no Commissions; *Lieutenants* from *Ensigns*; and *Captains* from Lieutenants: So that in fact, in the very formation of the Corps, the 78 Officers to be nominated by the Company, were to receive an eventual degradation. At the same time this eventual Degradation, is a proof of the manner, The Board of Controul *understood* to be *most conducive* to the *interests* of The Company's Officers.

But were we to admit, that there was no degradation, actual or eventual, to these 78 Officers themselves; how does *their promotion*, conduce to the interest of 1800 Officers, superseded by 86 of His Majesty's Officers, and also by these 78 Company's Officers converted into Kings; for when ever one of these 78 succeeds to a superiour Rank, in his own Regiment, he *at once* supersedes all the Com-

pany's Officers of that ſuperiour Rank, to which he had been promoted.

What Mr. Dundas afterwards ſays, concerning the expected opinion from India on the Subject, is undoubtedly a ſtrong reaſon for not taking any meaſure in adjuſting the point of rank, 'till that advice is received: But it operates, on the other hand, as a ſtrong objection againſt ſending *new Regiments* to India; to encreaſe *that diſſatisfaction*, in The Company's Officers, which is admitted to be, on the general well-grounded, tho' a queſtion might ariſe, what was the beſt mode of removing it.

On the 5th December, 1787, The Court of Directors taking Mr. Dundas's letter of 29th November into conſideration, came to a Reſolution, profeſſing their ſatisfaction at the former part of it, and declaring their readineſs to give all attention to any communication from the Board on the Subject.

But

" But that the Court have beheld, with
" the deepeſt concern, the determined
" manner in which the Right Honorable
" the Commiſſioners have thought proper
" to wave all further diſcuſſion upon the
" ſubject of withdrawing entirely the four
" Regiments intended to be raiſed for the
" ſervice of India.

" Deſirous as the Court may be of
" uniting moſt cordially with the Right
" Honourable the Commiſſioners, in every
" meaſure which may be thought neceſſary
" for the defence of his Majeſty's domi-
" nions in India, and unwilling, when objects
" of ſuch importance are at ſtake; to in-
" termix with them the more private con-
" cerns reſpecting the powers of the Right
" Honourable the Commiſſioners, and the
" Court of Directors, They cannot be en-
" tirely ſilent upon the determination of
" the Right Honourable the Commiſſioners
" above alluded to.

" In

" In juſtice to their Conſtituents, and in
" diſcharge of the truſt which they have un-
" dertaken, they are bound to repreſent to
" the Right Honourable the Commiſſioners,
" the very heavy, and as they conceive the
" very unneceſſary expence which will be
" entailed upon the Company, by adding in
" the manner propoſed, the four new regi-
" ments to the Company's Eſtabliſhment in
" India. That they muſt call to the recol-
" lection of the Right Honourable the Com-
" miſſioners, that the meaſure was adopted
" under the preſſure and apprehenſion of an
" immediate impending war, which left
" the Company no option with reſpect to
" the mode of raiſing men for their ſervice.
" That nothing ſhort of a neceſſity, ſo urgent,
" could have juſtified the Court in con-
" ſenting to the loading of their Eſtabliſh-
" ment with 86 additional officers, whilſt
" ſo conſiderable a number of their own
" remain unemployed, the competency of
" whom, to fill the ſeveral ſtations, in

" case of a war in India, the Court " humbly presume is sufficiently estab- " lished, by the gracious offer which His " Majesty has been pleased to make, of " incorporating 78 of them into his own " troops. That the necessity which first " led the Court to express the grateful " acquiescence in His Majesty's intention " of sending the regiments in question to " India, having now been happily remo- " ved, by the alteration which has taken " place in public affairs, the Court can " have no doubt of being able, by the " assistance of his Majesty's Ministers, to " raise men for their service, without incur- " ring the enormous expence which the " four new regiments will bring upon " them.

" That as all possible retrenchments, " both in their civil and military service, " are possitively enjoined them by the " 40th and 41st Sections of the 25th

"Chap. of 24th George IIId, it would "become more immediately the duty of "the Court, in compliance with the in-"junction so laid upon them, by the "Legislature, to step forward upon the "present occasion, even if the anticipated "revenues, and the enormous incumbrances, "under which the Company is labouring, "did not point out the necessity of the "most rigid and exact œconomy.

"That for the reasons thus submitted "to the consideration of the Right Ho-"nourable the Commissioners, the Court "are induced to hope, that they may be "pleased to alter their determination, which "they seem to have taken, and concur "with this Court, in a representation to "his Majesty, which may be the means "of procuring such an encrease of Euro-"pean strength as may be judged abso-"lutely expedient, in mode less destruc-"tive to the welfare of the Company, and

"which will remove from the minds, of "above 1800 gallant officers, the disgust "and indignation, which they must naturally feel, from a most cruel and unmerited supercession, after having served "the Company, upon the most trying "occasions, with zeal, fidelity, and success, and whose local knowledge, and "past experience, must render them much "more useful to the Company, and to "the Public, than any other set of men "whatever."

This Resolution was passed on the balot by 14 to 7.

On the 11th December 1787 the following letter from Mr. Boughton Rouse, the Secretary to the Board of Controul, dated the 7th December, on the foregoing Resolution was read, viz.

" To the Court of Directors of the
" United Company of Merchants of En-
" gland trading to the Eaſt-Indies

" Gentlemen

" The R. H. the Commiſſioners for " the affairs of India, having had under " conſideration the Minute of the Court " of Directors of the 5th Inſtant, I am " directed by them to acquaint you that " the generel ſubject to which that Minute " relates, being connected with objects of " more entenſive concern than thoſe to " which their commiſſion is conferred, " they have thought proper to ſubmit it " to His Majeſty's confidential ſervants for " their conſideration, in order that they " may receive his Majeſty's pleaſure upon " it.

" But that they think it neceſſary expli- " citly to inform the Court of Directors " of their reſolution, not to concur with

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" them in any ſuch repreſentation to the
" King, as that which is mentioned in
" the concluſion of their Minute, as they
" entirely diſapprove of the object, to
" which ſuch a repreſentation would be
" directed, and ſtill more of the terms in
" which that object is deſcribed in the
" Minute.

" I have the honour to be, &c.

" C. W. Boughton Rouſe."

" Whitehall,
" 7th December 1787."

The Court, after reading this letter, on the motion of The Chairman adjourned.

The following Motion was propoſed in a Court of Directors held the 19th December 1787. " That it is incumbent
" upon this Court to make a reſpectful
" application to His Majeſty, humbly to
" requeſt

" requeſt that he will be graciouſly pleaſed
" to withdraw the regiments intended for
" ſervice in India on account of the
" heavy expence to which the finances of
" the Company will be thereby ſubjected,
" and the diſſatisfaction which the meaſure
" muſt unadvoidably excite amongſt the
" Company's Officers, now ſerving in the
" Eaſt-Indies, the Court being perſuaded
" that in conſequence of the alteration
" which has taken place in public affairs,
" they ſhall, with the aſſiſtance of His
" Majeſty's Miniſters, have it in their
" power to raiſe any force that may be
" thought neceſſary for the defence of the
" Eaſt-Indies, upon terms infinitely leſs
" burthenſome to the Company."

The Conſideration was poſtponed from time to time 'till the 16th January 1788 when it paſſed in the affirmitive by 12 to

9, and a Committee was appointed to draw up an humble addrefs to His Majefty accordingly.

In the Interim, on the 28th December, 1787, The Chairman laid before The Court of Directors the following note he had received from one of His Majefty's principal Secretaries of State, Lord Sydney, viz.

"His Majefty's fervants do not propofe "to advife His Majefty to alter the refo- "lution of fending the four regiments to "India; they obferve in the papers tranf- "mitted to them by the Board of Con- "troul, that the Directors complain of the "effect which the introduction of fo many "officers of high rank in His Majefty's "fervice into India will have on the fituation "of the officers of the Company's Troops; "at the fame time they cannot but con- "fider the admiffion of the Company to "half the commiffions in the four New

"Regi-

" Regiments to be a confiderable advantage " to the Company's corps of officers. " But as the Board of Controul has called " for the dates of the commiffions of the " officers alluded to by the Directors, His " Majefty's fervants do not think them- " felves authorized to give an opinion con- " cerning the meafures neceffary to be taken " to prevent any juft complaint upon the " fubject in queftion, 'till that information " is laid before them."

On the 23d of January, 1788. This Petition refolved on the 16th January to be prefented to His Majefty, was fubmitted to The Court of Directors, and was by Ballot approved, and application made to Lord Sydney to prefent it to His Majefty, and a copy ordered to be fent to Mr. Pitt.

This Refolution was diffented to by The Chairman and alfo by the Deputy and 6 other Directors and fubfequently by an other Director.

In the preſent conſideration Individuals ought to be put entirely out of the queſtion, I have therefore thought it faireſt to bring all Objections, made to the Reſolution of The Court of Directors by the ſeveral Members, together.

1ſt. That The Company on 17th October had *accepted* the *offer* of the *four regiments*, at a time and under circumſtances that would have made it treacherous to our Country to have reſiſted and impeded their embarkation.

2d. Becauſe the Board of Controul and His Majeſty's confidential Miniſters have unequivocally given their ſentiments of the *neceſſity* of *keeping up* an *encreaſed permanent European Force* in *India*.

3d. The additional Expence does not appear nearly ſo great as ſtated.

4th.

5th. Becaufe there was ftrong reafon to hope the Board of Controul will on receipt of the Opinion *daily* expected from India, concur with the Court in their endeavours to obtain from his Majefty, fuch *mark* of His Royal favour to the Company's Officers as will remove every *juft caufe* of complaint on the *fubject* of *their rank* whilft ferving with His Majefty's Officers in India.

6th. Becaufe it was doubted if His Majefty's Minifters would (without having recourfe to Parliament) give fuch power to the Company as would enable them to raife any force that may be thought neceffary for the defence of the Eaft-Indies, *upon terms infinitely lefs burthenfome* to the Company, and even with frefh Parliamentary powers, if any great faving could be made in the expence of raifing a confiderable force.

7th. Becaufe Ships bound to Coaft and China, that do not fail by the middle of

February run *ſome riſk* of *loſing* their *paſſage* by the *uſual track* to China, and ſuch as are bound to Bombay and China that may remain after the 10th February *have not much chance of ſaving theirs.*

That the Expence of Demurage daily incurring by their detention is very conſiderable.

That all the Ships bound to China carry Treaſure to purchaſe the Cargoes to arrive in England in 1789, and that a diſappointment of their returning in proper time will be attended with much loſs to the Company.

8th. That the Reſolution of 16th January, 1788, will tend to promote and encourage that diſſatisfaction, amongſt the Company's Officers, which that Reſolution ſeems to be apprehenſive of.

9th. When the Regiments were accepted the ſtrongeſt aſſurances were conveyed *thro' the Chairs, that His Majeſty's Regiments ſerving* in *India ſhould be conſtantly kept compleat.* It therefore cannot now be expected, that Government will ſo far *break it's engagements*, as to *diſband* theſe four Regiments, or keeping them *compleat* at *home transfer the burthen* on the Publick to enable the Court of Directors to raiſe the privates for four additional Regiments to be added to the Company's preſent eſtabliſhment in order that the other half of the Officers, might be furniſhed from among the ſupernumeraries now in India.

10th. Becauſe in a letter received the 7th December, 1787, the Board of Controul have poſitively refuſed their concurrence to any repreſentation to the King, to ſtop the four Regiments from proceeding to India.

11th. Becauſe His Majeſty's Servants have notified in a paper received the 28th December

that

that they did not mean to advife His Majefty to alter the refolution of fending the four regiments to India, and they muft be moft competent to judge of the political views of the feveral powers of Europe.

12th. Becaufe after fuch information which may reafonably be concluded to convey His Majefty's Sentiments any further reprefentation would appear an unneceffary repetition.

13th. Becaufe It was apprehended the Court would appear to be wanting in refpect If, after the affurances given, the Court did not confide in thofe affurances, that effectual meafures would be taken to remove any *juft complaint* upon the *fubject of rank in India.*

Laftly. Becaufe it is to be feared that no *further application can have any effect* if the Petitions already prefented from the Company's Officers to *procure them equality* of *rank* in *India* with thefe of the King's, and the

repre-

repreſentations which have gone from this Court, to *explain* the *juſtneſs* of *their requeſt*, and to *enforce* the *neceſſity* of doing away the *inferiority* of *rank*, has *not been ſufficient* to convince His *Majeſty's Miniſters* and the *Board* of *Controul*, that the *good* of the *Service* and *Safety* of the *Publick weal*, preſs in the *ſtrongeſt manner* the *removal* of a *diſtinction* ſo *oppreſſive* and *injurious* to the Company's Officers.

This may be conſidered, at leaſt with as much propriety, the *firſt argument* in *favour* of the Court of Director's Reſolution, as *objection* to it; for ſurely the *good* of the *Service* and *Safety* of the *Publick* weal, preſſing in the ſtrongeſt manner for the *removal* of a *diſtinction* ſo *oppreſſive* aud *injurious* to the *Company's Officers*! Every reſiſtance is not only *proper*, but poſitively *incumbent*, and it would be a poor apology to alledge that the *Miniſters* and *Board* of *Controul*, and not the Court of Directors, were reſponſible for the encreaſe

of

of Diſcontent, by delaying to relieve the juſt complaint of the Company's Officers, 'till oppreſſion and Injuſtice overwhelmed the Publick Safety, and It would be an injurious reproach, to His Majeſty's Miniſters, to ſuppoſe they would, for *ever*, turn a deaf ear to *juſt remonſtrance*.

I have been thus diffuſe in ſtating all the Objections, becauſe there appears to me ſo little ſolidity in them, that I was afraid, if I had only recited ſuch as had any weight or ſpecious appearance, that it would have been ſuſpected I had unfairly ſtated them. I ſhall now offer ſome animadverſions upon them.

1ſt. Then, becauſe It would have been treacherous to our Country, *at the eve of a war*, to have refuſed the offer of Four Regiments! muſt, in *profound peace*, Four Regiments be ſent? were it only, even merely, ſuſpected

ſuſpected that ſending them will produce alarming diſcontents; and that too, without any conſideration whether an equivalent Force, if neceſſary, may not be ſent without riſk, and at a leſs expence.

nd. Admitting the Board of Controul, and His Majeſty's Miniſters, without any expoſition of the grounds for their opinion, are unequivocally for *keeping* up an *encreaſed permanent European Force* in *India*, Does it follow that it is neceſſary to be done in this manner? Surely—not!

3rd. Concerning the Expence.—The proper Officer at the India-Houſe, the Auditor of India Accounts, has ſtated that the difference in the annual expence, of the *Four Regiments*, or of an equivalent number of men ſent out by the Company, will be £. 51,312 in peace, and £. 86,004 in the Field; and the

difference in the expence of ſending them out is £. 10,625 *more*, for theſe Four Regiments, than for the like number of Recruits in the Company's Service.

Other Eſtimates are given by Individual Directors; One repreſents that, inſtead of the expence being *greater*, the expence of the *Four* Regiments is *leſs*, than an equivalent Force *of* The Company's Service.

If the Auditor's Statement is exceptionable? How came it to eſcape objection, when given in, or ſince, by pointing out in what it is not juſt? There ſeems however to be no ground for imputation againſt the fidelity or accuracy of the Officer; but thoſe Individual Eſtimates have a relation to a different Statement.

The Auditor ſuppoſes, with good ground, that The Company having now ſo many

Super-

Supernumerary Officers,[a] do not require any *new Officers* to be ſent out, and therefore that the *Expence* of *Officers* is *unneceſſary.* The other Eſtimates ſeem to be made, on a compariſon of The Company's Expence of an equivalent number of officers, of the ſame rank, as the Regiments contain: but this is totally contrary to the principles and poſition of their Opponents, who do not admit the *neceſſity* of *any new Officers*; and therefore theſe Individual-Eſtimates do not at all apply to the matter in queſtion.

6th. **O**bjection, is a continuation of the Former Objection and therefore would not require any animadverſion if it was not for an inſinuation, injurious to the Character of His Majeſty's Miniſters, as if they would not give the neceſſary powers to the Company, for enabling them to raiſe the number of men,

[a] The number of Officers of The Company reduced by the Peace Eſtabliſhment amounts to 600.

men, thought neceſſary for the defence of the Eaſt-Indies. As if it was poſſible for theſe Miniſters to ſacrifice the Publick welfare to reſentment.

7th. Concerning the Ships whoſe paſſages to China are hazarded.

If theſe allegations, were well founded, that Ships for Coaſt and China ſailing after the middle of February *run ſome riſk* of *loſing their paſſage* by the *uſual track*, and thoſe for Bombay and China ſailing after the 10th of February had *not much chance of ſaving theirs*—they would be ſomewhat alarming to thoſe who inſiſt on tranſporting the Regiments upon them—as thoſe *times* of *ſafe-paſſage* are now paſſed.

But admit the Regiments are not to go to India, where is the neceſſity for thoſe Ships to proceed to Bombay and Madraſs? they may be diſpatched to China direct, or in caſe the proper Bombay and Madraſs Ships are unable to take in all the Iron, &c. laden aboard them, one or two going thither will be ſuffi-

cient

cient to carry thoſe Commodities, which may be ſoon removed from one Ship to another: and the Treaſure proceed to China by the direct Ships; Thoſe Ships ſent to Bombay or Madraſs, who may be too late for the *uſual paſſage*, may proceed to China by ſome *other*, and arrive ſoon enough to return that ſeaſon; as their cargoes would be ready for them to receive without delay, and the Major part of the Ships going to China direct, aſſure the early arrival of the greater part in England.

5th. The expectation of receiving *daily*, the reply to the letters of July, 1787, that went by the Ranger in Auguſt 1787, which Veſſel, it is reported, was at the Cape of Good Hope in November, and could not therefore poſſibly get to Bengal before December, muſt be attributed to want of attention to circumſtances. But can it reaſonably be ſuppoſed that Lord Cornwallis would, immediately and precipitately, give his opinion on the point in queſtion, without time to conſult the temper and diſpoſition

diſpoſition of the Corps? and therefore it is not reaſonable to expect an anſwer, till the arrival of the latter Ships of next ſeaſon: the Ravenſworth, or any Ship *daily* expected, muſt have left Bengal, before the letters referred to arrived in India.

But let us conſider the probable conſequence, Paragraphs arrive in Bengal, giving flattering hopes that ſomething is intended favourable to the Company's officers, and that it is only delayed, till the opinion of Lord Cornwallis and Sir Archibald Campbell is received, in what manner it is to be done. The Sentiments of theſe Officers are tranſmitted to England; in the mean while arrives Four New Regiments, as a *permanent Eſtabliſhment*, and, being a *permanent Superceſſion*, therefore the more *grievous*, by Youths *without experience* or *ſervice*. It is a mockery to tell ſuch men, in ſuch circumſtances, that they *muſt wait with patience*, for the favour intended them, when every

every *juſt cauſe* of *complaint* will be removed: We may find men differ in opinion, on this Side, and on that Side of the Cape, What is *juſt cauſe* of *complaint*? and They may ſcorn the boaſted boon of 78 Officers to the New Regiments as an inſulting degradation.

But what is the ſubject matter of theſe Paragraphs?—not to give the Company's Officers an equality of rank with the King's in India—but to make ſome "arrangement relative to the reſpective ranks "of the King's and Company's Officers, "ſo as that neither party would have "reaſon to complain of irregular or unuſual promotions" which does not convey the moſt *diſtant idea* of *giving general rank* to the Company's Officers - and Mr. Dundas's comment upon it, clearly imagines that the Board of Controul thought, admitting 78, out of 1800, Company's Officers to *enter* into The *King's*, by *giving* up The

Company's

Company's ſervice, was to be held great grace and favour to The Company's Officers, at the ſame moment ſuperceeded by 86 *new Officers* of the King's.

Having I conceive fully diſcuſſed every thing, bearing the ſemblance of argument and reaſon, aduced by the minority of the Court of Directors; It may, in juſtice to the majority of that Court be proper to recite, at leaſt, part of their reply to the Diſſents of the minority. But I muſt repeat the ſubſtance, of the latter part of their reply, in the recapitulation; the former is chiefly taken up in the explanation of their conduct, which ſeems to be irreprehenſible, and does them honour.

The 9th objection, indeed, I have made no animadverſion upon, becauſe I really cannot tell what is the drift of it; The Government no more breaks their engagements by diſbanding theſe Four Regiments, than by diſbanding any other Regiments, when

when a Peace Eſtabliſhment makes the meaſure expedient ; and the greateſt part of the men will be wanted to compleat His Majeſty's Regiments now in India. The only Expence to the Public, is the difference of Half Pay to the rank they were, and in that to which they have been promoted ; and of the Enſigns who bore no Commiſſion before : - a Sum too trivial to be named.

If the Regiments, now in India, had Supernumeraries ſent out, without Officers, the Company could not object to pay a proportionate larger ſtipend than for a Regiment of 1000 men, and if *Encreaſe* of the *European Force* in *India* be *truly* the *Object*, it would be effected, in this mode, to the Company's content and advantage.

But if Government did not chuſe to ſend the men as Supernumeraries, the Company would be glad to receive any of the Privates enliſted for theſe Regiments,

and the men would in all probability be difpofed to enter into the Company's fervice.

One circumftance forcibly ftrikes me. All parts of the Court of Directors feem to concur in the fuppofition, that it is the intention of the Board of Controul, and his Majefty's confidential Minifters, to recommend to his Majefty, that local rank be given to the Company's officers. For my own part, I cannot fee the moft diftant infinuation to that effect: it is true they talk of wifhing to remove all *juft caufe* of *complaint*, but the expreffions, in which their wifhes are conveyed, brings to recollection, two lines in a Popular Poem.

"Plain words, thank Heaven! are always underftood,
"I *could approve*, I faid, *not* that I *would*."

But they would do well to confider! the confequences of giving an alarm to 1800 brave officers, at the head of 60 Batallions of Seapoys. For the confequences would be dreadful! if an idea fhould arife (however ground-

groundlefs) that there was an infidious intention, of amufing the Company's officers with expectation of a favourable determination to their claims: admitted to be juft! 'till the expiration of the Company's *exclufive* Charter, when, the King's Forces in India being deemed adequate to its defence, the Company by the claufe of a new regulating act, may be deprived of all military authority, and all their officers, at once, be caft on the World helplefs and forlorn! without the Company, who having it in their power to relieve their neceffities, they muft remain a Company of Merchants, entituled to carry on the Trade to the Eaft-Indies, in common with other fubjects.

By an artful, or perplexed, ftatement of the queftion, apprehenfions have been propagated, that the rejection of the four Regiments, would leave India deftitute of the Forces neceffary for its defence. But the queftion with the Court of Proprietors is

not?

not? whether the neceſſary addition of European Soldiers ſhall be ſent? but whether 86 officers, many of them without experience, ſhall go to ſupercede 1800 of the Company's old Officers, at an expence of £.51,000 per Annum to the Company, *more* than the ſame Forces, ſent to be commanded by their own Officers, of whom 600 are now unemployed, and patiently waiting 'till the neceſſity of Public Service calls them forth! at a time when almoſt the whole of the number of *Privates* in theſe new Regiments, are wanting to complete His Majeſty's *old* Regiments now in India, for which the Company are required to pay, as if they were compleat, being truly in that deplorable State, ſo well painted by the Board of Controul, " having " a *large nominal eſtabliſhment*, *deficient* in its " *effective ſtrength*, *adding* to the *expence*, but " not tending to increaſe the *ſecurity* of " the Company's Poſſeſſions."

On

On the 1ſt February 1788, at a Court of Directors, a letter from Lord Sydney dated 31ſt January was read, ſignifying, that his Lordſhip had laid before The King, the Memorial and Petition of The Court of Directors, which the Chairman and Deputy Chairman delivered to him on the 24th January, and had received His Majeſty's commands to acquaint them in anſwer thereto, "that his Majeſty does not judge proper to "change his reſolution of ſending four "Regiments to India; that in the formation "of theſe Corps, His Majeſty attended to "the ſituation and pretenſions of the Com-"pany's Officers in that Country; and that "his Majeſty has it under his royal conſi-"deration to make any farther regulations "which may appear expedient for the "good of the ſervice."

After deliberation on this letter, and on the Law opinions on a caſe, prepared by The Company's Solicitor, reſpecting the Four Regiments.

It was reſolved by Balot "That the re-

"ſolution

" ſolution of this Court of the 17th Octo-
" ber laſt, accepting the four regiments in-
" tended for ſervice in India, and binding
" the Eaſt-India Company to the payment
" thereof, be reſcinded."

This reſolution was diſſented to by ſome of the Directors.

At a Court of Directors the 8th February 1788, The Court was informed the Chairman and Deputy Chairman had attended the Board of Controul the preceding day, and that the Board had informed them they would communicate, on, or before, the 12th their ſentiments reſpecting the propriety of ſending the four regiments to India.

At a Court of Directors held on the 11th the following letter from Lord Sydney was read, viz.

To the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Eaſt India Company.

Whitehall, 10th February, 1788.

" Gentlemen,

" I have his Majeſty's commands to acquaint you, that three of the regiments

" deſtined

" deſtined for India, are in readineſs for
" embarkation at Chatham, Dover, Deal,
" and Portſmouth; and to deſire that you
" will inform me whether any, and what
" ſhips of the Company are ready for their
" reception, and at what ports it will be
" moſt convenient for theſe troops to em-
" bark.

" I am, Gentlemen,

" Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

" SYDNEY."

A motion was made " that the Chairman " and Deputy Chairman ſhould be deſired " to confer and ſettle with his Majeſty's " Secretary at War, the various matters ne- " ceſſary to the embarking the three regiments " mentioned in Lord Sydney's Letter, on " board the ſhips now lying at Graveſend." This motion was on the Balot negatived--- and it was then Reſolved, by Balot, " That " the Chairman and Deputy Chairman be " requeſted to wait upon the Right Honourable " Lord Sydney, and to inform his Lordſhip, " in the name of this Court, in anſwer to

" his

" his letter of the 10th February inftant,
" that the Court of Directors have refcinded
" their refolution of the 17th October laft,
" accepting the four regiments intended for
" fervice in India, fo far as bound the
" Eaft-Company to the payment of the
" expence of the faid four regiments; but
" that this Court, ever defirous of obeying
" his Majefty's commands, and of co-operating
" with his Minifters, as far as they can,
" confiftent with the duty which they owe
" to their Conftituents and to the Public,
" are ready to receive and accommodate his
" Majefty's troops on board the Company's
" fhips; provided that it be clearly under-
" ftood, that the faid four regiments do not
" go at the requifition of the Court of
" Directors, that the Eaft-India Company
" are not bound to pay any part of the
" expence thereof, and that fuch forces are
" not to be confidered as part of the per-
" manent eftablifhment in the Eaft-Indies."

At a Court on the 12th, The Chairman acquainted the Court that he had commu-

nicated

nicated the Refolution of laſt Court to Lord Sydney, who had ſignified his intention of ſending a letter to the Court on the ſubject, in the courſe of the day.

At a Court held the 13th February, 1788, the following letter from Lord Sydney was read.

Whitehall, 12th Feb. 1788.

" Gentlemen,

" I thought it neceſſary to lay immediately " before the Board of Controul, the anſwers " which you delivered to me this day to " my letter of the 10th inſtant.

" Upon a full conſideration of the matter, " the Board came to the Reſolutions which " I now incloſe to you, theſe reſolutions " having been ſubmitted to his Majeſty, " have met with His Royal approbation, " and I am commanded to deſire that you " will communicate them to the Court of " Directors without delay.

" I am, &c.

" SYDNEY."

" Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

Whitehall, 12th February, 1788.

" At a Board of Commiſſioners for the Affairs of India,

Preſent.

" The R. H. Lord Sydney
" William Pitt
" Henry Dundas
" W. W. Grenville
" Lord Mulgrave

" Lord Sydney lays before the Board the " following reſolution of the Court of Di- " rectors held yeſterday, and communicated " this day to his Lordſhip, by the Chairman " and Deputy Chairman of the Eaſt India " Company, viz.

" At a Court of Directors held on Monday " the 11th Feb. 1788, Reſolved, that the Chair- " man, &c. (vide p. 63. l. 14, from bottom.)

" the Board having conſidered the above " reſolution are of opinion, that with reſpect " to the two firſt of the conditions therein " contained, by which the Directors claim " a right to withdraw the requiſition for " the ſaid troops, and thereby to liberate " themſelves from any obligation under the " Act of 1781, to pay the ſums directed by " that Act to be paid by the Company for " the King's troops going to India, at their " requiſition; they conceive it is by no means

neceſſary

" neceſſary for them to enter into the diſ-
" cuſſion of that queſtion. That it does
" not appear to the Board that the ſaid
" Act has made any proviſion for the caſe
" of the Court of Directors being deſirous of
" withdrawing ſuch requiſition, or that it is
" by any means clear that under the ſpirit
" of the Act ſuch requiſition could be with-
" drawn under the preſent circumſtances,
" without making the Eaſt-India Company
" liable to the payment of conſiderable ad-
" ditional expences.

" That with reſpect to the third point,
" the Board do not conceive that the King's
" troops going to India, either under ſuch a
" requiſition or otherwiſe, are to be conſidered
" as forming any part of the Company's
" eſtabliſhment in the Eaſt-Indies. They
" certainly do not feel themſelves enabled to
" decide, at preſent, what may be the num-
" ber of King's troops which it may at
" any time hereafter be expedient for his
" Majeſty to ſtation in the Eaſt Indies. But
" the Board think it right to add, that they
" do not now foreſee any circumſtances which
" are likely to alter their opinion, that the

" number now going out are neceſſary to be
" kept up in addition to the force actually
" there.

" That under this opinion the Board will
" feel it their duty to exerciſe the ſuper-
" intending powers which have been veſted
" in them over the revenues of the Britiſh
" poſſeſſions in the Eaſt Indies, in ſuch a
" manner as may effectually provide that thoſe
" revenues ſhall be applied to defray the
" expence of the force which they conſider
" to be neceſſary for the defence of thoſe
" poſſeſſions. And they have no doubt that
" the Court of Directors will not think it
" expedient to bring upon their conſtituents,
" a conſiderable additional charge by com-
" pelling his Majeſty's ſervants to have recourſe
" to any other mode of ſending thoſe troops
" than that which has hitherto been uſual.
" If the government is reduced to ſuch a
" neceſſity, the Board will undoubtedly feel it
" right, in every principle of juſtice, to
" direct, that whatever may be the expence
" of this mode of conveyance ſhall be de-
" frayed from the revenues in India."

The Court of Directors having deliberated thereupon, a motion was made to embark the

the troops, which paſſed in the negative— and the Court adjourned.

The Court being met again it was by balot " Reſolved, that This Court do ad- " here to their reſolution of the 11th in- " ſtant, and they will on Friday next diſ- " patch ſuch ſhips as are ready to proceed " on their Voyages to Bombay and China, " leſt ſuch ſhips, by the lateneſs of the " ſeaſon, might be in danger of loſing their " paſſage, and this Court do think it en- " cumbent upon them to declare that there " will then remain 17 ſhips in which His " Majeſty's troops may be conveyed to In- " dia, if the meaſure ſhould be finally re- " ſolved on by competent authority."

A liſt of Ships to be diſpatched was read.

It was then on ſeveral motions, by balot, " Reſolved that the Chairman and Deputy " Chairman be deſired to convey the fol- " lowing Reſolutions to the R. H. Lord " Sydney, in anſwer to his Lordſhip's letter " of the 12th inſtant, as the Court of Di- " rectors humbly conceive, that the Reſo- " lutions of the R. H. the Commiſſioners " for the affairs of India, are contrary to " the Act of the 24th of His preſent Ma- " jeſty, and adverſe to the right and privi-

" leges

" leges reserved to their Constituents under " that Act, they have resolved, that a Meet- " ing of their Constituents, be called for " the purpose of laying before them, the " proceedings relative to the sending of the " four regiments to India, and until the " sentiments of their Constituents can be " known, they humbly request, that no mea- " sures may be taken, by his Majesty's " Ministers, for transporting those troops to " India."

The Court Resolved that a General Court should be called, for Tuesday the 19th, and that the Proceedings of the Court be printed, and sent to each Proprietor forthwith.

The Court also Resolved, that it be referred to the Committee of Shipping, to take into their immediate consideration the latest times the Ships of this Season ought to sail from the Downs, agreeable to their present destinations, with a fair prospect of making their passages in proper time, and report.

At a Court of Directors the 15th February 1788, a letter from Lord Sydney was read enclosing the following Paper viz.

" Whitehall 14th February 1788.

" At a Board of Commissioners for the " Affairs of India,

Present,

Present.

R. H. Lord Sydney
William Pitt
Henry Dundas
W. W. Grenville
Lord Mulgrave.

" Lord Sydney communicated the follow-
" ing Minute of the Resolutions of the Court
" of Directors, which was delivered to him
" this morning by the Chairman and Deputy
" Chairman.

" At a Court of Directors held on Wed-
" nesday 13th Feb. 1788, Resolved that this
" Court do adhere, &c. (vide p. 69. line 4.)

" The Board having considered the above
" Resolutions, observe with satisfaction, that
" the Directors have agreed to summon a
" Court of Proprietors, and lay before them,
" the Proceedings relative to the sending the
" four Regiments to India, as they cannot
" entertain a doubt, that the Proprietors will
" see how materially their interest is concerned,
" in removing the obstructions which have
" been thrown in the way of transporting
" on board the Company's ships, the regiments
" which His Majesty thinks proper to send to
" India. But to prevent any possible loss of
" time, the Board are of opinion, that mea-
" sures should be taken eventually to provide

a sufficient

" a ſufficient number of tranſports for carrying
" ſuch of the Regiments as may be ready to
" embark; and they think it proper to re-
" peat, their determination, to direct the
" expence of conveying the troops to be de-
" frayed out of the revenues of the Britiſh
" poſſeſſions in India; as the protection and
" ſecurity of thoſe poſſeſſions is manifeſtly the
" object to which the revenues ariſing there-
" from, muſt, at all times, in the firſt inſtance
" be applied. That Lord Sydney be requeſted
" to communicate a Copy of this Minute to
" the Chairman, and Deputy Chairman, for
" the information of the Court,"

The urgency of the time does not allow the intended *Recapitulation.*